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US Dept. of Agriculture
Washington DC 20250-0249

April 19, 2003

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the use of irradiated meat in the National School Lunch Program. Irradiation destroys vitamin content, creates free radicals, and spawns new chemicals that have never been tested for safety. One purpose of irradiation is to sterilize feces-contamination - a sickening alternative to making meat production cleaner and safer.

Without studies on normal children or observation over the long term, we cannot know whether irradiated foods are safe. The FDA never did the battery of tests suggested by the National Academy of Sciences that the FDA has adopted as the standard for testing new food additives. In addition, the studies the FDA used to approve irradiation over the years are mostly deficient: some suggested health effects or were conducted at lower than maximum doses.

We have no reason to trust FDA claims of safety, given this track record. I am outraged that irradiated food may become part of children's school lunches without the informed consent of their parents.

Sincerely,

MArch

Montserrat Archbald